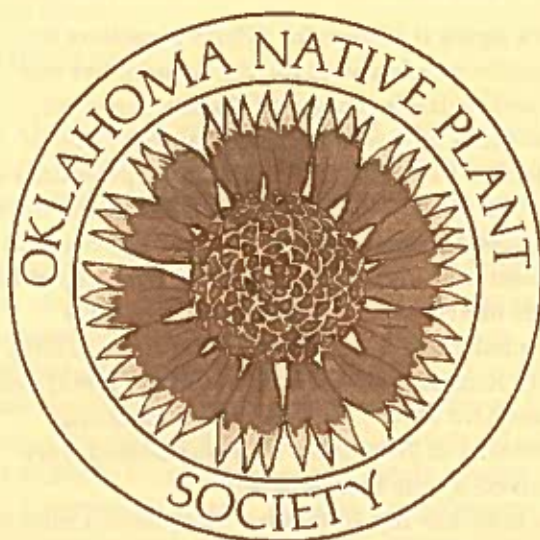




The purpose of the Oklahoma Native Plant Society is to encourage the study, protection, propagation, appreciation and use of Oklahoma's native plants.

Volume 21, Number 1
Spring 2006

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FOR NEXT ISSUE IS
15 March 2006**

Gaillardia

The Oklahoma Native Plant Society Newsletter

CALENDAR

Note: the events dated below are followed by either a page number for further descriptions or the contact person.

- March 7: Crosstimbers Chapter meeting, Jeff Nekola speaks on heirloom tomatoes and peppers. Page 9
- March 17: NE Chapter Happy Hour. Page 9
- March 18: Central Chapter field trip to Keystone Ancient Forest Preserve. Page 10
- March 21: Crosstimbers Chapter meeting, Dan Folkes speaks on tree ring research. Page 9
- March 24: Crosstimbers Chapter potluck dinner, Ron Tyrl will talk about his Australia trip. Page 9
- March 24: NE Chapter field trip to Redbud Valley. Page 8
- March 25: Central Chapter field trip to view Pottawatomie County flora. Page 10
- March 29: Mycology Chapter meeting at Martin Park Nature Center. Page 10
- April 2: Mycology Chapter field trip at Martin Park Nature Center. Page 10
- April 8: NE Chapter field trip to Beth Rooney's property. Page 9
- April 21: NE Chapter Happy Hour. Page 9
- April 22: NE Chapter field trip to Tag Hollow. Page 8
- May 1: NE Meeting, Clark Overbo presents "Fungi". Page 9
- May 5,6: Wildflower Workshop, Grove, Oklahoma Community Center. Correct date. Page 7
- May 13: NE field trip to Beth Walker's property. Page 9
- May 19: NE Chapter Happy Hour. Page 9
- June 5: Board Meeting, Tulsa Garden Center.

ONPS THANKS THESE DONORS

Harriet G. Barclay Fund

David A. Phillips

Mary D. Price

Anne W. Long Fund

Mary D. Price

General Fund

Richard Bradley

Wildflower Workshop

Color Oklahoma

Betty Kemm, in memory of Alene Carter
Wildflower Workshop

IMPORTANT GENERAL NOTICES

Connie Murray

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Paul Buck

DORMANCY

As I look about at the Oklahoma Native Plant Society I see others interested in the world around them and seeking answers to the questions of nature popping up in their minds. At those moments I think how fortunate we are to share this comradeship. I know that at one time or another most of us have settled down in an isolated, comfortable spot in the field or yard and made an effort to fuse oneself with nature. For some who have not sought out the peace of nature via solitude let me suggest you locate a quiet spot for a personal retreat. Here in northeastern Oklahoma check out the Tulsa Garden Center Arboretum, Mohawk Park, Redbud Valley, or call Richard Bradley about using his wonderful back yard. One could even take a chair out of doors and watch a tree grow. After all, we of the Oklahoma Native Plant Society are an unusual group. I suspect some would even call us weird. Most of us, rather than be upset by that epithet would understand it.

No doubt some react as I do to the peace and solitude of Nature by becoming philosophical and finding oneself prowling through the depths of your mind and searching for answers to those difficult questions that continue to appear. For me those questions are usually, "Where did we humans come from?" "Where are we going, now and after death?" and "Why?" When those questions crowd my mind I often relive my undergraduate philosophy and religion classes and am, once again, thankful for the Liberal Arts education I received. Although, for me, many of the answers to those questions have changed through the years I continue to be comfortable with them.

Usually those issues are pushed aside by others, more related to the moment. Such as, how does that soaring turkey vulture locate food? How long has the sycamore against which I am resting been here? (I wish it could speak and tell me of Oklahoma in the early 1800s.) How did that small rock jasmine get here? Is it a relict left behind by retreating ice or perhaps a pioneer, moving north as the environment changes? What evidence is there any environmental changes are currently

taking place?

Some of the questions considered in this column through the years have dealt with anthropomorphism, allelopathy, pollination, myrmecochory, carnivorous plants, reproduction and thigmotropism. I hope that in each case questions have been answered but more numerous additional ones have been raised.

Another interesting question related to plant behavior is that of dormancy, frequently defined as the failure of mature, intact seeds to germinate under favorable conditions. We should modify that definition to include other plant organs such as roots, terminal and axillary buds, flowers and shoot systems. We know many perennial species are dormant through the winter months. At this time let us limit our discussion to seed dormancy and recognize other plant parts demonstrating similar behavior. There are several questions related to dormancy such as Why?, How? and How Long?

First, let us consider the basic question of why seeds remain dormant for varying periods. Everyone reading this should be able to come up with a reason and virtually each could be traced back to a delay in germination until a period of favorable environmental conditions exist. Consider this just a moment. At our latitude, many of our plants grow actively during the warm periods of winter so they are established and ready for spring when the threat of frost is past, spring rains are falling and photo periods are lengthening. These species, frequently called winter annuals include such as *Hepatica* (Liverleaf), *Lamium* (Henbit) and *Viola* (Violets) which then complete their reproductive cycle before the large, woody plants leaf out developing dense canopies.

Often it is important for a plant to delay seed germination. One example is our annual local cockle bur which is subject to the shifting sands of our mature meandering rivers. Each fruit (bur) produces two seeds, one of which generally germinates the following spring, assuming the fruit are not too deeply covered by drifting sand. The second has an oxygen impervious coat which breaks down over the next season releasing available oxygen to the embryo and which may then germinate. What a wonderful physiological

advantage. Two seeds per fruit, but germination over a two year period. In this case, dormancy based on an oxygen impervious coat.

Then there is dormancy due to seed coats being impervious to water. When you next encounter a Kentucky Coffee Tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*) bearing fruit (remember the species is dioecious) examine the soil beneath it and you will probably find numerous older seeds that have not germinated. I suspect it will take a decade or two for physical abrasion by the soil particles or action by microorganisms to penetrate the seed coat permitting water to reach the embryo. This form of dormancy may often be broken by simply physically penetrating the impervious seed coat. The process, which has commercial applications is called scarification. Someone check the seeds of the common *Desmanthus illinoensis* (Prairie Mimosa or Illinois Bundleflower). I have the feeling the same type dormancy occurs here.

There are many reports on plant dormancy for any one interested. Actually one could look at any comprehensive biology or botany text and see what the author presents in the section on dormancy. Most current texts contain detailed sections of literature citations. If one were to go to Google and simply type in dormancy, it will provide at least 600,000 references.

A simple but interesting experiment dealing with plant dormancy was started by W.J. Beal at Michigan State University in 1879. He collected seeds of twenty one species of common local wildflowers and stored them under similar environmental conditions. Beal and subsequent workers have been reporting on periodic germination rates over a period of 120 years.

It would be thoughtless to ask how long seeds remain viable. As I indicated in an earlier contribution it would be similar to asking what is the tallest tree in the world or how many undiscovered caves are there in the United States. To give you an idea let me say it has been reported there is evidence some seeds of Lotus plants have germinated after having been dormant for two thousand years, based on archeological dating of surrounding soil.

COLOR OKLAHOMA UPDATE & REMINDER By Kim Shannon

Color Oklahoma Wildflower Grant Program

The Color Oklahoma committee met in Tulsa on February 7, 2006. Our major topic that day was our new Grant program for this year and hopefully, years to come. The grant award must be matched by the applicant with cash. For the first year, we hope to offer four to six grants with Color Oklahoma's contribution ranging from \$300 to \$500 each. The range of these amounts was selected for two reasons. The \$300 minimum ensures that at least one acre will be planted at each site. The maximum of \$500 was set so that multiple grants could be offered and all our funds were not spent at one or two sites.

The funds that will be awarded each year will be used to purchase native wildflower seeds in unique and custom combinations of both annuals and perennials. Appropriate seed combinations will be selected based on the location of the site in the state, its typical annual precipitation amount, soil type and the applicants' preferences. The only current limitation will be that sites must be on interstate and state highway rights-of-way, as the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) will provide the manpower to plant the seeds. Commercially available wildflower seed mixes often contain non-native species and they can not be used in the drill seeders that do the planting. All seeds will be purchased by the Color Oklahoma committee from local and regional seed producers.

Applications for the Color Oklahoma Wildflower Grant Program will be available soon on both the Color Ok website and the ONPS website.

Applications can also be mailed to those who do not have access to the internet. We encourage civic and nonprofit groups, schools and universities, Indian Nations, corporations and individuals to apply for the grant program. More details will be available soon at www.coloroklahoma.org or you can contact Kim Shannon at either okpenstemon@cox.net or at 918.425.0075. All applicants will work in conjunction with ONPS and ODOT to ensure applications are submitted with correct information. Contact information for ODOT's

**REMEMBER! MARK YOUR CALENDAR!
RENEW YOUR TAG!**

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Chad Cox

Thank you for informing us about the list of invasive plants that you have put together. We appreciate your interest in conserving Oklahoma's native plant communities. With regard to "adoption" of the list by the State, at this time there isn't a compelling reason to justify the time and effort required to accomplish this. There are no state regulations concerning these plant species with the exception of those plants already regulated by the Department of Agriculture.

As far as an educational tool, the OK Invasive Plant List would be a welcome addition to our collection of information that is routinely distributed to the public via the 88 Soil and Water Conservation Districts across the state. Unfortunately, the Oklahoma Conservation Commission does

Karla Beatty
Education Coordinator
Oklahoma Conservation Commission
2800 N. Lincoln Blvd., Suite 160
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Personally, I have trouble with the comment by Karla Beatty about no compelling reason for Oklahoma to adopt the list of invasive plants here in Oklahoma. I even have problems with just having a list given that invasive plants are second only to habitat lost for the decline in native species. But so far Ron Shuttles response is the most encouraging one from all of our efforts to date.

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From: SOONER SAID AND DONE
Ed Montgomery

The choice of mistletoe for our state flower never has been popular with some of our citizens. Former University of Oklahoma President George L. Cross, a botanist was among those who did not think a parasite was appropriate. (We had the state flower, officially our floral emblem, before we had a state. The Oklahoma Territory adopted the mistletoe in 1893, fourteen years before statehood, and the state picked it up in 1907. We also have a state wild flower, the Indian blanket.)

As the Oklahoma City author Pendleton Woods has pointed out, the debate over the mistletoe was never in the same league controversially as the redbud, our state tree.

Woods ran down the story for the Winter 2001-2002 War Chief, publication of the Indian Territory Posse of Oklahoma Westerners. The redbud as state flower became an international issue. It was the idea of Mrs. Virgil (Mamie Lee) Browse, who earlier had organized the International Rotary Anns with the first chapter in Oklahoma City, her hometown. She wanted the redbud blossom to become Oklahoma's state flower. When she learned we already had a state flower she switched to the redbud for state tree. She had already obtained newspaper publicity for her favorite tree by urging that more of them be planted and that blooms be left on the trees so everybody could enjoy them.

Her campaign came during the administration of E.W. Marland of Ponca City, governor from 1935 to 1939. State Sen. Nat Taylor of Strong City in Roger Mills County introduced the redbud legislation.

It immediately ran into opposition. Many citizens nominated other trees. (I would have favored the pecan). Some said the redbud was not big enough to be a state tree. However, the legislation cleared both houses and went to the governor.

The real controversy started before Marland had a chance to study the proposal. Mrs. Roberta Lawson of Tulsa, first vice president of the Federated Women's Clubs, told the governor by telegram that the redbud was the Judas Tree that Judas Iscariot used to hang himself after he betrayed Christ

"Although the Bible does not name the tree," Woods wrote, "there had later crept into Judaslore a famed, odd detail: that Judas hanged himself upon a flowering tree whose blossoms turned red in shame. Thus some had called the redbud the Judas Tree."

The state dean of the Episcopal Church agreed with Mrs. Browne that the tree was not named in the Bible. An Oklahoman who was native of Jerusalem said he had never heard of a redbud tree back home.

Newspaper stories and editorials appeared all the United States and in foreign countries. Newsweek and Time magazines carried stories on the debate. Marland eventually signed the bill.

Edgar Guest, a popular syndicated newspaper poet, wrote a poem, "The Judas Tree". Its final stanza:

'And yet if true the story ring,/By chance or by intent,/Then Judas chose a glorious thing/To be

his monument"

Reprinted courtesy of Ed Montgomery and The Norman Transcript. Suggested for reprinting by Ruth Boyd.

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INDOOR OUTING REPORT

Chad Cox and Sue Amstutz

The Indoor Outing was held at UCO (Thanks Clark Ovrebo) on February 11. The theme was based on this being the 196th birthday of Charles Darwin. How lucky we were to have him visit us and tell of his life, even answer questions. Although his development of his theory of evolution was highlighted, we were told about the many things he did during the rest of his life that was spent in England. Despite his many contributions to botany, he maintained he was not a botanist. Mr. Darwin relied heavily of media provided by Stan Rice.

Gloria Caddell continued with this theme by first



Hedyotis nigricans pin flower



Hedyotis nigricans thrum flower

Carol Eames provided us with a slide trip to the Galapagos Islands. She has visited the islands three times and had slides of many of the plants in bloom. Of course, there were plenty slides of the birds and reptiles as well as many of spectacular scenes. Next to actually visiting the islands, you could not have a better view of the Galapagos.

The afternoon portion of the Indoor Outing found the participants enjoying the warmth of the tropics as we toured the Crystal Bridge Tropical Conservatory at the Myriad Gardens in downtown Oklahoma City. Outside the temperatures hovered in the mid thirties with wind chills dropping the actual feeling on exposed skin even lower. But inside the building we were immediately warmed with the tropical environment all around us. Dick, our docent, guided us through the building, explaining as we went the various plants we observed.

We were led under the splashing waterfall and up a rocky flight of natural steps which comprised the "Adventure Walk". Once on top we strolled along the "Sky Walk" being able to look down on the tropical sights below, giving us the feeling one might have if soaring above the rainforest canopy. Dick pointed out that over 60 varieties of palms grow in the Conservatory, including coconut palms which we could see bearing fruit as we

ambled along the Sky Walk. Among the blooming plants we noted were orchids (the Conservatory is home to what once was the personal collection of an orchid fancier who donated his entire collection to the Crystal Bridge), several colorations of wild ginger, golden trumpet vine, and a plant which resembled bird-of-paradise. In addition to the coconuts, ripening bananas could be seen, fruits which Dick told us were so far superior in flavor to the ones we buy in the grocery store that should we ever be able to sample a fresh-off-the-tree banana, we would never enjoy a store-bought one again!

Since members of Northeast Chapter and our guests from Cross Timbers Chapter in Stillwater had shared a Field Trip in January to the Tulsa Zoo's Tropical Rain Forest exhibit, it was interesting for us to compare the two facilities, both of which are tropical but beyond that were amazingly different. Diversity is the key word useful in both facilities, with the Oklahoma City conservatory being primarily devoted to plant life while the Tulsa zoo exhibit is an over-all display of botanicals, birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians, the entire ecosystem in miniature.

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27th ANNUAL WILDFLOWER WORKSHOP

Joanna Orr

The 29th Annual Wildflower Workshop will be held in Grove this year on Friday, May 5 and Saturday, May 6. (Note: This is the correct date). Grove nestles in an arm of Grand Lake in wooded Eastern Oklahoma. This is the first time the Workshop will have visited the area. Grove is a favorite of tourists and fishermen and has many craft and specialty shops. It is also noted for its fishing in the clear waters of Grand Lake. Some of the speakers at the Workshop will include Phillip Moore, Environmental Scientist from the Arkansas Department of Transportation who will describe the successful wildflower program in Arkansas. Edna Wiser and Brenda McCaskill from Sulphur will give tips on how Sulphur raised \$5,000 for wildflower seeds last year. A representative from Color Oklahoma will describe the new grant program for wildflower seeds which is funded by the Wildflower license tag. Dr. Leonard Miller, founder of Lendonwood Gardens, will talk about the Gardens and the native Elk Ridge. A featured speaker will be J. P.

On Earth Day, April 22, the chapter will explore Tag Hollow, a beautiful forested valley on the shores of Lake Spavinaw. The property is owned by the City of Tulsa and is largely undeveloped

except for the access road and a few trails. Tag Hollow has been recommended as a place to view a vast number of dogwoods in bloom. The chapter will meet at Spavinaw State Park for picnic lunch and then caravan to Tag Hollow for an afternoon of exploration and flowering. Our Chapter meeting on May 1 will feature a program on "Fungi" to be presented by ONPS' own mushroom expert, Clark Ovrebo. As in the case of all Northeast Chapter meetings, a potluck supper at 6:00 p.m. will precede the evening's program. Beth Walker has invited the group to her property in Wagoner County for a May 13 field trip. Beth says, "I'm completely selfish about wanting to find out what beneficial and noxious plants I have. My great hope is preservation and providing wildlife habitat." We plan to help Beth meet those objectives as we tour the sandstone outcroppings, meadows and a small stream on her property. In addition to our spring field trips and chapter meetings our Panera Bread Happy Hours will continue on the third Friday of each month. March 17, April 21 and May 19 are Happy Hour dates. Chapter members will also be attending the Wildflower Workshop on May 5 - 6. Sue Amstutz, Chair NE Chapter

FIELD TRIP RULES

- Participation is at your own risk.
- Preregistration is required for all field trips.
- Field trip announcements will contain the name, address, and telephone number of the leader. If you have doubts about the terrain, difficulty, etc., ask.
- Collecting any plant parts or other materials at the site must be approved by the field trip leader.
- Field trips take place rain or shine. Hiking boots, long pants and a hat are essential.
- Bring water and lunch or a snack. Sunscreen and insect repellent are always in demand. Field guides, a camera and binoculars are nice.
- All ONPS field trips are open to the public at no charge, unless charges per-member are specified in the announcement. Visitors and newcomers are always welcome.
- Children old enough to keep up are welcome. Pets are not.

Crosstimbers Chapter Paul Richardson

Six members of the Cross Timbers Chapter and one member of OSU Botanical Society (OSUBS) joined the North Eastern Chapter to visit the Tulsa Zoo Tropical Rain Forest exhibit on January 21. Their report will undoubtedly include species names and a more extensive description of what we saw, but we wanted to add our perspective of the trip. Using Ron Tyrl's map and relying on Olen Thomas to give maps to late arrivals, our two vehicles left the OSU parking lot in plenty of time to meet the group at the Zoo prior to the tour. Our guide, Chris Gabbard, said we were the largest group he has led. The exhibit was open to the public during our tour but we all got chances to see many very interesting tropical plants, some of which we recognized as favorite indoor plants here.

Chris Gabbard is the exhibit's arborist and in charge of acquisitions and maintenance. He showed us that some of the plants such as the tree that produces kapok spread easily and may need to be thinned. Others like the Forest's large palm must be replaced periodically. When it hits the roof and must be cut back the single apical growth tip is destroyed and it dies. There are large easy to spot arborescent forms like these and others that are small or subtly placed or floating that can be very hard to spot. Another special problem, we learned, was that the Forest uses professional plant procurers. Many of the plants provided are not correctly identified by the source, so Chris and staff are continually determining what the plants actually are. Chris also has to do much climbing and hanging to get to the large plants. He literally "walks the rafters". Some animals in the exhibit were shy, so we might not have seen all of them. Others were under foot or like some birds watched, scolded and almost attacked. The Rain Forest exhibit is well worth visiting and the time there was pleasantly spent talking to other plant enthusiasts. Being part of a guided tour is a really good idea in order to see some of the more subtle features. The ONPS has agreed to co-sponsor two speakers with OSUBS. They will both be here in March and all members from all chapters are invited to hear both of them. Jeff Nekola will speak on March 7th, at 7:30 pm, OSU campus Life Sciences West 103. He is expert on heirloom plant and the

tall grass prairie. The topic of his talk will be heirloom tomatoes and peppers. Dan Folke is with the tree ring research group at the University of Arizona, Tucson. He studies rare plants and relating tree ring structure to vegetation changes. His talk will be on March 21, at 7:00 pm, in Life Sciences West 103. His topic is "Taking the Long View: Long-term Climate and Environmental Change as Seen Through the Tree-ring Record". Our regular March potluck dinner will be held on March 24, at 6:30pm, OSU campus Life Sciences East. Ron Tyrl will be our speaker. The title of his presentation is "Old Friends in New Places: A Taxonomist Visits Australia". We are still working on plans for our June field trip and do not have the location or date confirmed at this time.

Central Chapter Marilyn Stewart

On November 28th, Melynda Hickman spoke to a large group of Central Chapter members about the Wildscapes program which is administered by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. Of course attracting critters means using our wonderful natives.

Deborah Dalton of O.U. had been a speaker at a C.C. meeting several years ago and shared pictures and stories about her attempt to transform a suburban yard to a native landscape. On January 30 th, she was back with new pictures and tales, and wow, what an accomplishment! A great deal of work, but obviously worth every minute she has invested.

On March 18, we will go to the Keystone Ancient Forest Preserve. This is a distance for some members, but it is a rare treat and should be well worth the trip. We will be mailing out directions to everyone in the C.C., but we tentatively plan to meet around 10:00 at the convenience store at the 209th W Ave exit from US 412 and then carpool in from there. John Fisher will be leading the group. This is a little

more strenuous hike than we usually do. The rain date for this will be March 25. Bring a sack lunch. April 9, we will look at the flora of Pottawatomie County, Bruce Smith will lead this trip so it should extra fun. We will meet at Bruce's house at 1:00. Maps will be sent out to members.

At our last meeting we voted on new officers and are trying a new structure. Lou Duke will be in charge of all field trips and outdoor excursions. Kathie Webb will be doing the indoor meetings, Bonnie Winchester is in charge of mailings and Marilyn Stewart does the Gaillardia news. If any members have questions regarding a function of the Central Chapter, call Marilyn at 405-382-8540 or 405-2551707

Mycology Chapter Clark Ovrebo

Clark Ovrebo will give a lecture on spring mushrooms at Martin Park Nature Center, Wednesday, March 29, 7 pm. On the following Sunday, April 2, 1 pm, he will lead a mushroom walk at Martin Park. There will be a \$2 fee per person (to Martin Park Nature Center) for the walk. Martin Park Nature Center is located at 5000 W. Memorial Road, Oklahoma City, just west of Mercy Hospital.

WELCOME THESE NEW MEMBERS

Connie Arnold, Pryor
Clyde and Wanda, Lebanon
Karen R. Hickman, Enid
Marueen and Steve Forsythe, Bartlesville
Donna Fulks, Purcel
Julie and Mike Greenwood, Tulsa
Pam Larkin, Claremore
Scott O'Rourke, Tulsa
Terry Radcliff, Broken Arrow
Matthew VanDenBroeke, Norman

Oklahoma Native Plant Record

Volume 5 Number 1

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The Gaillardia

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